

The Mid-Region Council of Governments develops socioeconomic forecasts every 4 years for the entire four county area of Bernalillo, Sandoval, Tarrant and Valencia, as well as southern Santa Fe County. The forecasts assist planners in determining future transportation needs, informing local planning and land use policy, and guide the evaluation of land use and transportation project alternatives. MRCOG's socioeconomic forecasts are also available to member governments and planning agencies for their own use.

Key resources used in the development of MRCOG Forecasts are [the Bureau of Business and Economic Research](#), [the U.S. Census Bureau](#), and [the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions](#).

Other data sources include: locally maintained land use inventories; rural addressing files; aerial photography; planning and zoning cases; local news; residential and commercial building permits for new construction; meetings with municipal planners, government officials; school facilities planners; meetings with major developers in the region; meetings with planning and consulting firms; public information meetings; approved Comprehensive plans; approved Sector development plans; approved Area plans; other planning policies; and approved Master Plans.

The forecast overview and methodology is provided in the [2030 Socioeconomic Forecasts by DASZ](#)  **789.32 Kb** for the mid-region of New Mexico.

This represents a summary of the 2030 socioeconomic forecast for the region.

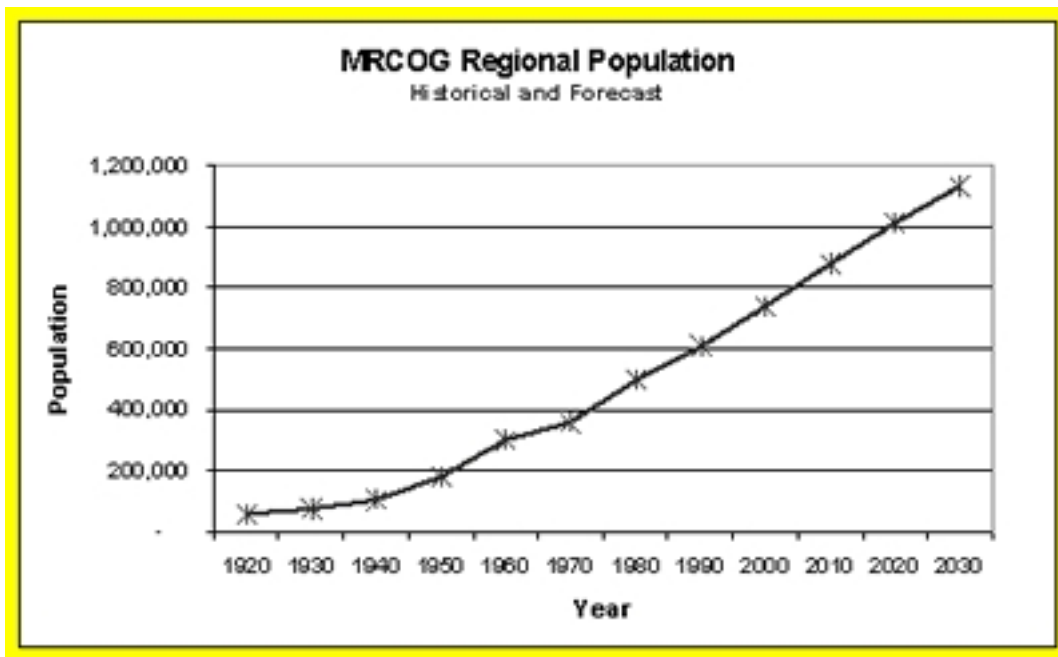
Population

The southwest is becoming an increasingly attractive destination to live, and it is estimated that since 2000 the MRCOG region has gained over 100,000 people. Construction in the early part of the decade hit record highs and new developments have sprouted up throughout the region.

At the same time, the region is responding to the fact that resources are becoming more and more strained. Alternative water sources are being pursued, the building of new schools has been placed on a critical path, and congestion management strategies have become central to transportation planning. Looking ahead to 2030 it is clear just how important it is to plan now for the growth that is likely to come.

The MRCOG Region is forecast to grow by just over 327,000 people and top a million people by 2030.

Historical and Forecast Population, MRCOG Region



Source: Bureau of Business and Economic Research, U.S. Census Bureau, MRCOG

The above chart shows how the growth rate of the region compares to total population growth. It illustrates the growth spurt in the region between 1930 and 1960 when the pace of growth averaged over 5% annually as the population climbed quickly. Looking toward the future, it shows that although the population is expected to continue growing steadily in numbers, the pace of growth is projected to slow over time.

The counties that comprise the MRCOG region will experience growth to varying extents. The following table shows the estimated population in 2004, and the forecast population for 2030, by county.

Forecast Population Change by County

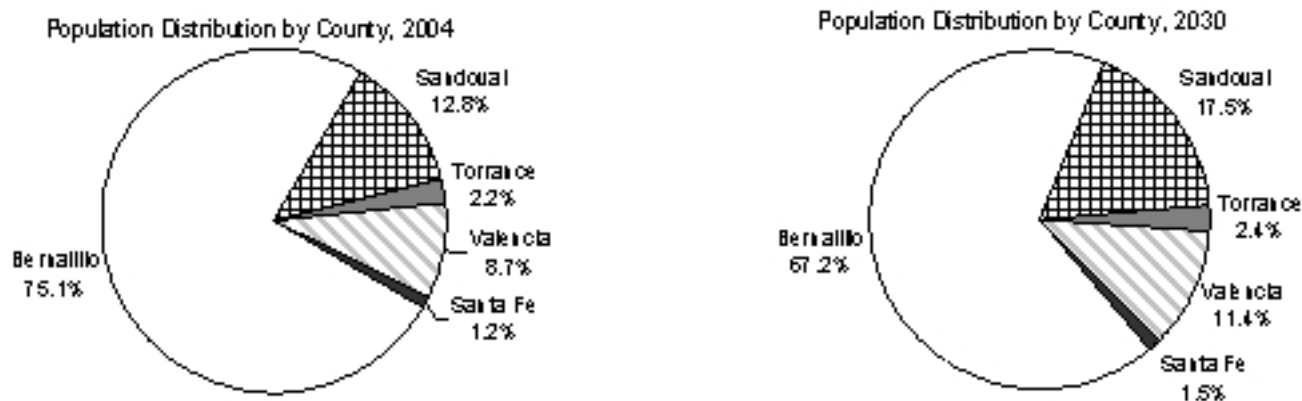
Area	2004	2030	# Growth
Bernalillo	602,413	759,000	156,587
Sandoval	102,462	197,182	94,720
Torrance	17,695	27,479	9,784
Valencia	69,754	128,922	59,168
So. Santa Fe	9,786	16,889	7,103
MRCOG Region	802,110	1,129,472	327,362

Source: Bureau of Business and Economic Research, MRCOG

Bernalillo County will continue to experience the bulk of population growth, capturing almost half of all new persons. Sandoval County will capture an increasing share with nearly 95,000 new people and a growth of 92% over the forecast period. Valencia County is second only to Sandoval County in terms of pace of growth, growing by 85% and gaining nearly 60,000 new people. Torrance County and Southern Santa Fe County, combined, are forecast to add another 15,000 people to the region.

The following charts show how the regional share of the population by county are projected to change over the forecast period.

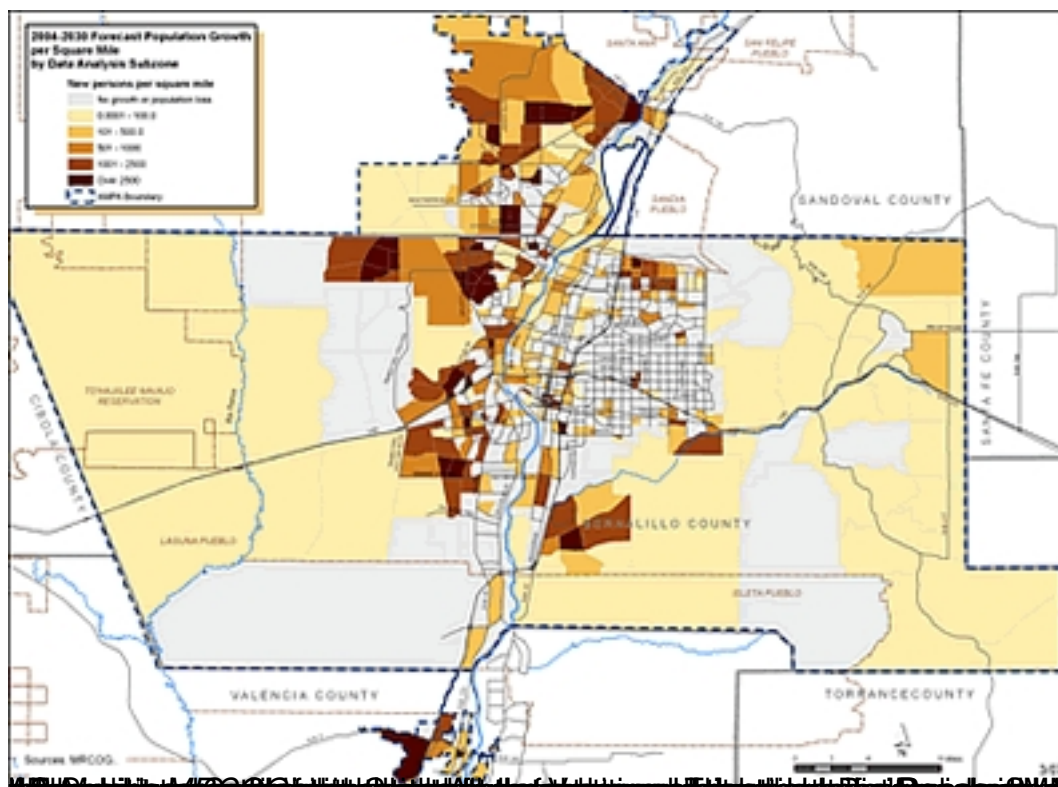
Forecast Population Distribution by County



Source: Bureau of Business and Economic Research, MRCOG

An increasing shift is anticipated over the next several years towards growth in the counties that surround Bernalillo County, most noticeably to Sandoval and Valencia Counties. By 2030 Bernalillo County will still be home to over 67% of the region's population, however, this is down from 75% in 2004.

The following map shows where population growth is projected to be strongest within the metropolitan area.

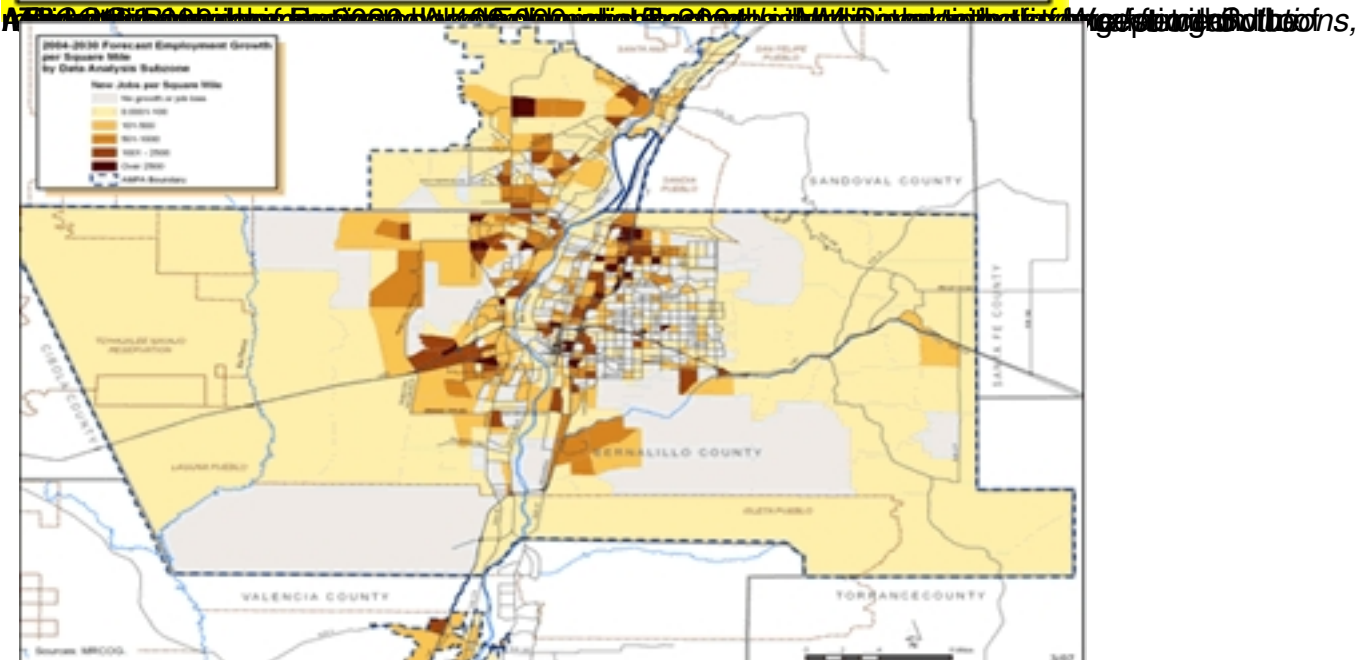
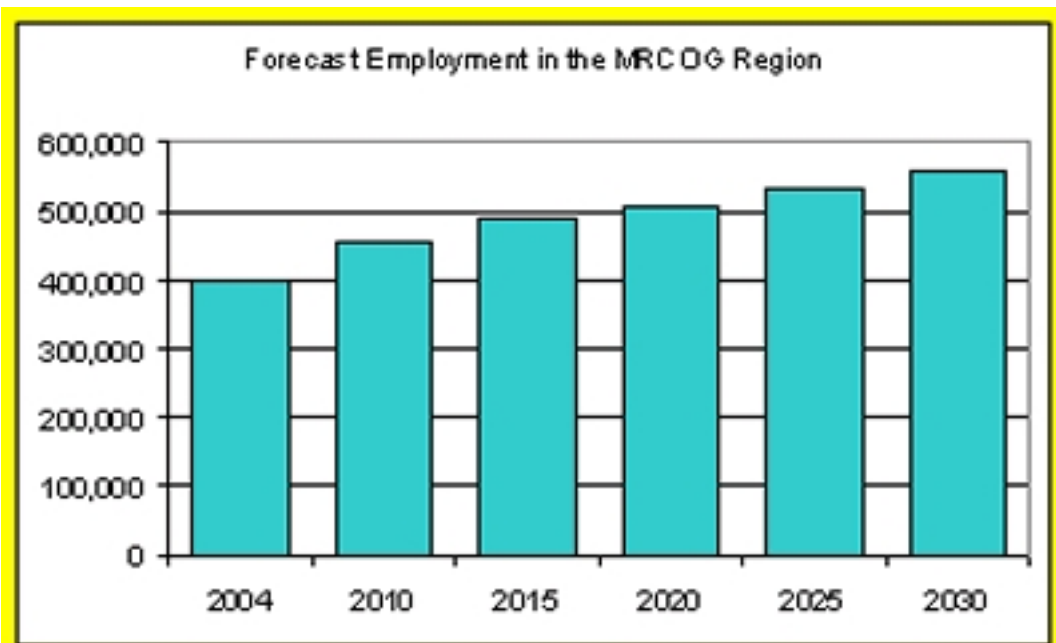


Employment

A glimpse into the future of employment in the MRCOG region reveals a picture of growth. The population is expected to increase by nearly 300,000 between now and 2030, and naturally, growth in population serving employment will follow. Specifically, education and health related jobs are expected to double. Schools will be necessary to serve our expanding communities and healthcare will be particularly in demand due to not only a growing but an aging population.

Industries that are not dependant on the local population are generally more sporadic in nature. However, the region is currently enjoying growth in several such sectors. Our Science Parks are expanding and new ones are being considered, the film industry is gaining momentum with new production facilities, and several manufacturers such as Tempur-Pedic, Merillat Cabinets and Tesla Motors are choosing to locate in the region.

Job growth is expected to continue in the Albuquerque metro area. The table shows MRCOG's long range employment projection for the MRCOG region.



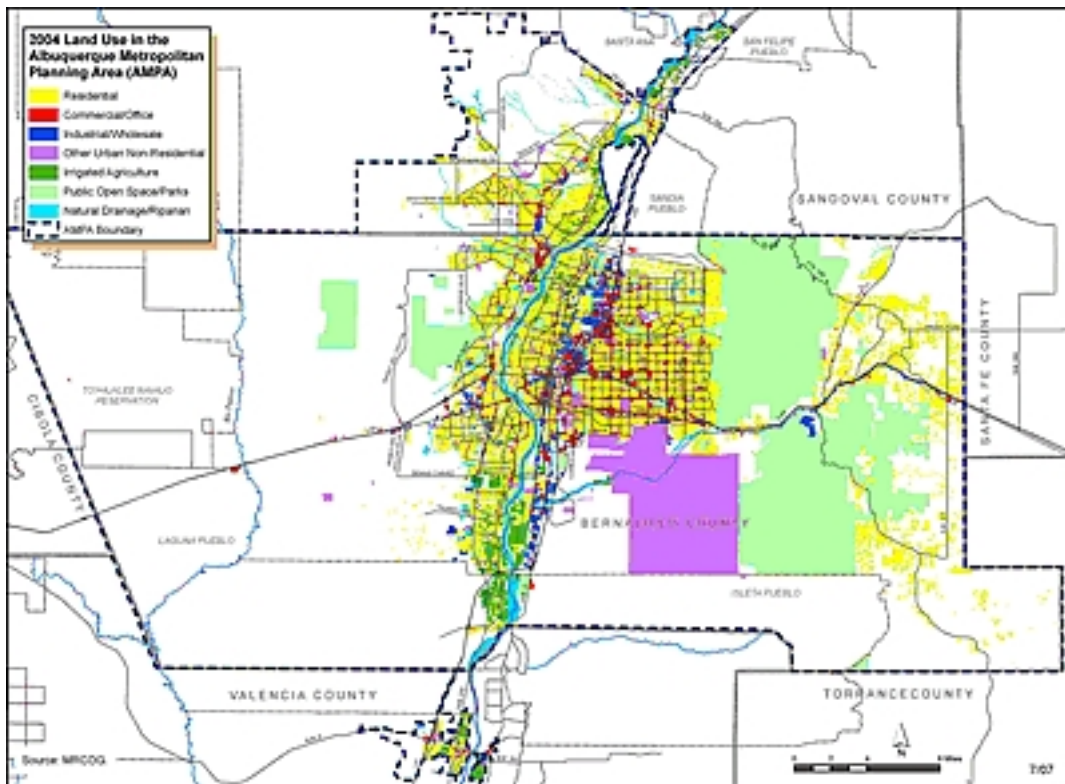
Land Use

MRCOG operates a Land Use Allocation Model (LAM) designed specifically for the Middle Rio Grande Region by Planning Technologies in 1996. LAM serves as the engine for the socioeconomic forecast, and is essentially designed to forecast growth based on land use plans and site suitability measures.

The major advantage to basing population and employment forecasts on land use is that it ensures that projected densities are reasonable and appropriate. This avoids the potential for forecasting excessive development among small areas, and makes certain that forecast

development is consistent with current and proposed zoning and land use plans for a given area. It should be understood however that the location of forecast land uses may be approximate in many cases, and the 2030 forecast should not be used as a forecasting tool for specific parcels of land.

The following map is an illustration of the Land Use Forecast for 2030.



Source: MRCOG, see the PDF version of the [2030 Forecast Land Use 2.1.1 Mb](#)

Contact: Kendra Watkins (kwatkins@mrcog-nm.gov)

